

REBATES FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Recommendation

Mayor Michael Di Biase recommends:

- 1) That staff be requested to research and report back on rebate programs for municipal election campaign contributions that are currently being offered by other Ontario municipalities, identifying all the legal aspects of offering a program, how rebates are determined, what contributors are eligible for rebates, the relative impact on voter turnout, the cost and how the rebate programs are paid for; and
- 2) That staff report on the merits of cost sharing a rebate program with the Region for Regional representatives.

Economic Impact

The report requested will identify the cost to tax taxpayers of offering a program that rebates contributors for a portion of their municipal electoral campaign contributions.

Purpose

To request staff to investigate rebate programs in terms of how they operate, their benefits and their cost.

Background - Analysis and Options

Recently in the media and in a report prepared by Mr. Robert MacDermid of York University there has been discussion about municipal rebate programs. Under these programs a municipality rebates to the contributor a portion of their campaign contribution paid to individuals who are running for municipal office. From the various reports it appears that the vast majority of municipalities have not established rebate programs. However, it is an interesting concept worth investigating. I believe Council would like to better understand how these rebate programs operate, what are their benefits, who pays for them and if there is an opportunity to improve voter turnout.

Conclusion

Rebate programs for municipal election contributions should be researched to provide Council with a full understanding.

Attachments

None

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Di Biase
Mayor